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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate radio stations, Thursday, August 24, 1933.

Hello Folks.- Everywhere I turn now-a-days home gardeners are asking me the question, "is it too late to plant snap beans, beets, and other vegetables," for fall use? In other words, is there sufficient time remaining to mature these crops before frost? We know from experience and from Weather Bureau records about when to expect the first killing frost in the fall in our locality. We also know about how many days the various garden crops require from the time the seed is planted until they are ready for use. For example, our best varieties of snap beans require about 45 days to make a crop of pods. If October 10th should happen to be the date that we may expect the first killing frost in our locality, then by counting backward or subtracting 45 days from October 10th, we find that the coming Saturday - August 26 - is about the deadline for us to plant snap beans.

Beets require from 45 to 55 days, but are not injured by light frosts. Sweet corn requires from 75 to 100 days, according to variety, and so it is too late to plant sweet corn anywhere, except in the more southern sections. Tomatoes require even a longer period than sweet corn to make a crop late in the season. That is where you southern gardeners have the advantage over the rest of us, for you still have time to grow some of the tender crops. Here is a point well worth remembering, when planting vegetables late in the season, always plant the early or quick-maturing varieties, because their growth period is shorter than the later varieties. Another point, plant these late crops only where they will get the full benefit of the sunlight. The daylight hours are becoming shorter and shorter as the season advances, and our late garden crops need all of the sunlight they can get.

All of you who live in the central and southern sections have the opportunity of growing a number of the vegetables that are more or less frost resistant. I refer to lettuce, spinach, kale, late cabbage, mustard, rutabagas, turnips and beets. These are among the most important of the cool weather crops, and in many sections of the cotton belt they can be grown all winter. I've found that to get the best results from these late crops you need to follow exactly the same practices that you do for extremely early crops, that is, prepare your soil extra well, and fertilize rather heavily with quick-acting fertilizers. Mix the fertilizer very thoroughly with the soil so that the feeding rootlets will have no trouble finding it. Watch for a good moisture season to do your planting, or if the soil is fairly dry, be sure that you firm it well over the seeds. When planting in dry soil, I sometimes run water through the planting furrow before I drop the seeds, then cover the seeds with the dry earth, and firm it down with the back of the hoe.

Fall rains are beginning in many sections, and it is largely a matter of getting the ground prepared, and the crops planted, but many of you southern

folks will find a fall garden a big help in keeping the dinner table supplied.

It's about time for you northern gardeners to be getting your storage cellars ready to store your garden products for winter. Those of you who have furnace-heated homes will do well to partition off a portion of the cellar, and arrange to ventilate and keep it cool for the storage of apples, potatoes, and everything that requires a relatively low temperature in storage. Beets, carrots, cabbage, and turnips can often be safely buried in pits outdoors. The odor of cabbage and turnips is objectionable when they are stored in the house cellar, and most people prefer to store them in the barn cellar, or in an outdoor pit. Where a small quantity of garden products, say not more than five or six bushels, are to be stored, good results can be secured by burying a large box in the ground, then dividing the box into compartments, and storing one product in each compartment. Ventilation of the storage pit must always be provided for, and the simplest method is to nail four pieces of 6-inch board together in the form of a square box, and set this box in one corner of the pit with the top extending several inches above-ground. A hood made of two scraps of board should be placed over the top of the ventilator to keep out the rain. Be sure that you locate your storage pit where it will not become filled with water.

I know of a lot of folks who have built outdoor cellars of field stones, or of concrete blocks, and have covered them over with dirt and sods for protection. As a rule, these outdoor cellars are built into the side of a hill with the door on the downhill side, and a ventilator in the top extending several inches above the dirt covering. Most everything in the line of fruits and vegetables may be stored in these outdoor cellars - storm cellars some of you call them.

And here is a suggestion for you southern folks who have sweet-potatoes to store and no place to store them, and that is to do like a lot of the growers in Louisiana are doing, build a pine-pole potato house. Go into the woods and cut a lot of pine poles, notch them together at the corners like an old-fashioned log cabin and daub the cracks full of heavy clay mud. The roof can be made of poles and clapboards and according to Prof. M. Hull extension horticulturist of Louisiana you can build one of these pole houses without any actual money outlay except for nails and the hinges and hasp for the door. 176 of these pine pole sweet potato houses were built in Louisiana last year.